Wishing you the best of the season

Metro will not be publishing until Dec. 26. Watch for our special Boxing Day preview of 2013.

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HOCKEY-STARVED FANS, REJOICE! THE WORLD JUNIOR TOURNAMENT STARTS ON BOXING DAY PAGE 21

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Teachers 'damn mad': Union

One-day walkout. Local elementary school teachers hit the picket lines

ANGELA MULLINS
angela.mullins@metronews.ca

A pause and a collective deep breath might be the only way to end a bitter dispute between teachers and the province, a union executive said on Thursday.

Speaking as Thames Valley teachers walked a picket line, Susan Swackhammer, vice-president of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, said she and others like what Liberal leadership hopeful Gerrard Kennedy suggested recently.

"His plan was (that) the government not enact (Bill 115), step back and, in exchange, teachers' unions would step back and wait until the next leader is chosen," Swackhammer said, cars honking and teachers cheering in the background. "It looks like a new leader is the only way forward."

With two weeks of one-day strikes over, ETFO leaders are expected to announce their plan for the new year on Friday. Some have said the plan could include much larger — and longer — strikes if the government enforces contract legislation that freezes wages and cuts sick days.

The legislation is an "attack" on education — a precursor to stripping more money out of schools in coming years, said Phillip Mack, president of the ETFO Thames Valley Local.

"(The) first step is us, (the) second step is the classroom," Mack said. "We know if we don't stop this flow now it will continue on for some time."

Passed this summer, the legislation gives unions until Dec. 31 to reach collective agreements with local boards. The chances of that happening are looking less and less likely, union leaders say. Premier Dalton McGuinty, however, says he's optimistic teachers can negotiate new deals in the next 11 days.

Teachers have spent hours of their personal time — and money — helping to fulfill McGuinty's self-described role as the education premier, Swackhammer said.

Now they feel angry and betrayed. The expression of that anger was one of the driving forces behind the one-day strikes. "They had an opportunity to stand up and say,'I'm damn mad, and I want you to know it,'" Swackhammer said.

By the numbers

4,700

The estimated number of Thames Valley elementary and occasional teachers who walked off the job on Thursday.

Teachers picket the Thames Valley District School Board office on Dundas Street early Thursday. Elementary and substitute teachers manned about 30 picket lines across the district as part of one-day provincewide strikes that started on Dec. 10. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Safety at elementary schools

'Locked-door' policy in works for schools

A "locked-door" policy will be enacted at all 4,000 elementary schools in Ontario by next September, Premier Dalton McGuinty announced on Thursday in reaction to last week's shooting rampage that left 26 dead at a school in Newtown, Conn.

"In the aftermath of that tragic event that unfolded in the U.S., I think there's an important question that we need to ask ourselves: Are we taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of our kids at school?" McGuinty said at St. Fidelis Catholic Elementary School in Toronto.

"I think the response to that question requires that we assure parents that all of our elementary schools are locked during the day, that we are controlling access into our elementary schools."

Only about 850 Ontario elementary schools took advantage of a government program that saw video cameras installed outside school doors, but that was meant for buildings where the entrance was not in clear view of the office. It's time to expand that program to all elementary schools, at a cost of about $10 million, McGuinty said.

Dalton McGuinty
THE CANADIAN PRESS

He added schools will not be turned into fortresses with boarded-up windows, but he wants parents reassured that the province is doing all it can to ensure kids are safe in their classrooms. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Woman charged after attack on native protester

Idle No More.
Video of incident leads police to woman accused of wielding hammer on car

ANGELA MULLINS
angela.mullins@metronews.ca

A woman is facing a criminal charge after footage of her allegedly attacking a First Nations protester was posted on YouTube.

The video shows a woman walking out of a Wellington Road apartment building just south of Grand Avenue and talking briefly with protesters before hitting a car with a hammer.

After the attack, the woman is seen walking calmly back toward the apartments.

Police Const. Ken Steeves said the victim reported the incident about 1:15 p.m. Investigators used the YouTube video to identify the suspect and lay a charge of mischief under $5,000.

The suspect's name is not being released to ensure her safety.

"She's (seen) exiting a building (on the video), the witnesses all saw her leaving that building, so we don't identify her out of (fear of) potential repercussion," Steeves said.

"Only she can answer that," Steeves said when asked about a possible motive.

No other problems were reported during the protest, part of a nationwide movement centred on First Nations' treaty rights.

On the web

To see video of the incident involving a First Nations' motorcade, visit metronews.ca.

Called Idle No More, backers of the campaign say federal policies — specifically those in omnibus budget legislation, Bill C-45 — are weakening environmental laws and hurting aboriginal communities. First Nations should be recognized as sovereign stakeholders in decisions affecting land and resources, they claim.

About 1,000 people were involved in London. Traffic was snarled for hours Wednesday as marchers — accompanied by a motorcade — made their way from Highway 402 and Colonel Talbot Road to downtown's Forks of the Thames.

Follow Angela Mullins on Twitter @MetroAngela

Weather

Snowfall expected Friday

Environment Canada says a winter storm will bring rain and snow to southern and central Ontario on Friday.

Forecasters say a weather system tracking toward southern Ontario will bring a mix of precipitation types.

The London area could receive five centimetres of snow on Friday, followed by trace flurries on Saturday and Sunday. No advisories or warnings have been issued for London, but the accumulation could be enough to ensure a white Christmas. **AM980/AM980.CA**

No great flakes

- So far this month, the area has recorded just a single centimetre of snow.
- The record for least amount of snow in December in London is 14.2 centimetres, set in 1965.

Food bank filled to the brim thanks to generous donations

Jennifer Spinozzi, 21, of Sarnia, a student at Western University, sorts donations Thursday at the London Food Bank after leaders of the Business Cares Food Drive dropped off a massive load of drinks, canned goods and other non-perishables. Despite being slow out of the gates, the Business Cares drive netted 259,870 pounds of food, exceeding its goal and weighing in at 3,869 pounds more than last year. And on Friday, CAW locals 27 and 302 presented a cash donation of $11,000 to the food bank. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

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Make-A-Wish

Foundation to grant 1,000th wish

Make-A-Wish Southwestern Ontario will reach the milestone of granting its 1,000th wish next month. The wish goes to five-year-old Andie Morrison of London, who has blackfan diamond anemia. Andie and her family will go to Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla. METRO

Joint investigation

Man facing child porn charges

A London man has been charged with possession of child pornography following a joint investigation between the London Police Cyber Crime Unit and the OPP. David Rock, 51, has been charged with two counts of possessing and accessing child pornography. METRO

Gainsborough-Hyde Park

House fire damages home

Firefighters were assessing the damage from a morning house fire Thursday. Emergency crews were called to a home on Bayswater Crescent. No one was home during the blaze. Police say damage is estimated between $300,000 and $400,000. AM980.CA

Break and enters

Police looking for suspects

Middlesex OPP responded to a break-and-enter on Manley Drive in Dorchester Monday. Suspects kicked open a side garage door and entered the house, taking coins, tools and a computer. Another break-and-enter took place on Wingreen Lane in Kilworth. METRO

Plover Mills Road

Man dies in collision

A Middlesex Centre man is dead after he drove his SUV into a tree. OPP said that on Tuesday evening, an SUV travelling west on Plover Mills Road left the road and entered a ditch, striking a pole and then a tree. Cody Calwill, 21, died Wednesday from his injuries. METRO

Homeless for the holidays

Close to home. Kader will sleep on the street for a week to raise funds and move past old times

Heykel Kader IAMWHOIAM.CA

A Londoner is going homeless for the holidays.

Heykel Kader, owner of I Am Who I Am fitness studio in Wortley Village, will close up shop Friday evening and spend the week living on the streets to raise awareness for homelessness in London.

"I have absolutely no plans for where I'll sleep, how I'll make money or where I'll find food," said Kader.

There are only two rules he plans to follow.

"I'm not going to sleep in any shelters, and I'm going to stay away from soup kitchens, unless I can volunteer in exchange for leftovers at the end of the day," Kader said. "I don't want to take away from those who really need it."

The initiative is in partnership with Youth Opportunities Unlimited, a cause that's close to Kader's heart.

At 15, Kader left home. With only a little money in his pockets, he found himself living on the streets, unable to afford rent. "It got me into a tough lifestyle," Kader said. "I was in and out of the justice system and making bad choices."

Seven years ago, Kader decided to take life into his own hands. He went back to school and opened his own fitness studio in London.

"For me to finally move on, I need to reconnect with that time of my life," Kader said.

Kader will be selling toques outside his studio Friday to raise funds for Raising the Roof and Youth Opportunities Unlimited, which helps connect street youth with the resources they need to get back into the community. He's raised $4,000.

To learn more, visit you.ca, or follow Kader on Twitter @keykelkader.

AMANDA GRANT/FOR METRO

Can the Lightning stop the Express?

Morgan Lewis of the London Lightning fights for the ball with Mike Helms of the Windsor Express. Thursday night's game at Budweiser Gardens was the team's first since spoiling its perfect record last week against the Oshawa Power. The final score was unavailable at press time. For more on Thursday night's game, visit metronews.ca. AMANDA GRANT/FOR METRO

Western. University and students reach sports deal

Two Western University sports fields known for being muddy and closed for more than half the year could soon get a $4.47-million makeover.

The University Students' Council, the Society of Graduate Students and the university have agreed to build new artificial turf fields, replacing the grass fields on Huron Drive. Western's property and finance committee is expected to vote on final approval in January.

Forced closures on the fields have landed more than 800 students on waiting lists for intramural sports, officials said.

The university has pledged $2.77 million, with students picking up the rest of the tab.

ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Paycheque. Creating work for Londoners this holiday

Local business Employment Express is putting its skills to good use this holiday season. Rather than giving gifts to local charities, the business is finding work for Londoners, helping them earn a paycheque in time for Christmas.

"We approached businesses in the community to see if they need extra work done over the holidays and we've matched them with someone in the city," said Sharon Mercer, co-owner of Express Employment Professionals.

The jobs range from filling in for people on holiday to working in mail room or helping with administrative tasks.

"It's a win, win, win."

AMANDA GRANT/FOR METRO

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Olympian working as escort

Double life. After reports of prostitution, runner Suzy Favor Hamilton tweets that she's been working for an escort service for the past year

Three-time Olympic runner Suzy Favor Hamilton has admitted leading a double life as an escort.

She apologized Thursday after a report by The Smoking Gun website said she had been working as a prostitute in Las Vegas.

The 44-year-old Favor Hamilton lives in Madison, Wis. The Smoking Gun said she has been working for the past year for an escort service.

Soon after the story appeared online, Favor Hamilton released a series of tweets saying in part that she was "drawn to escorting in large part because it provided many coping mechanisms for me when I was going through a very challenging time with my marriage and my life."

A middle-distance runner, Favor Hamilton competed for the U.S. at the Olympics in 1992, 1996 and 2000, but did not win a medal. She won seven U.S. national titles.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Suzy Favor Hamilton reacts after winning the women's 1,500-metre run at the U.S. championships in Atlanta in 1999. The three-time Olympian has admitted leading a double life as an escort. JOHN BAZEMORE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Unlucky 2013?

Good luck charms installed in Times Square

Officials in New York City have gathered good luck charms to accompany the unlucky number 13 that will light up when the New Year's Eve ball drops in Times Square.

The New York Post reports that 13 good luck charms will be installed along with the sign atop One Times Square for the celebration that will ring in the new year. The charms include a four-leaf clover, gold coins and a Buddha statue to assuage the fears of any superstitious revelers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beauty pageant

Miss Universe crown heads back to the U.S.

An American university student is the new Miss Universe, bringing the crown back to the U.S. after a drought of more than a decade.

Twenty-year-old Olivia Culpo won the title Wednesday night in Las Vegas, replacing outgoing champion Leila Lopes of Angola and beating out 88 competitors from six continents.

Miss Philippines, Janine Tugonon, came in second, while Miss Venezuela, Irene Sofia Esser Quintero, was third. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boxing Week is on now and ends Dec. 31

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Balancing charter rights.
Supreme Court split on freedom to testify in veil

A sharply divided Supreme Court of Canada was not able to definitively rule Thursday whether a woman can wear a religious veil known as a niqab while testifying in court.

In a rare 4-2-1 split decision, the Supreme Court ruled that a witness can cover their face in certain circumstances.

The case pitted two protections in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms against each other — religious freedom versus an accused person's right to a fair trial.

In the end, a slim majority decided essentially not to favour one over the other: the court affirmed the importance of both rights.

The practical effect of that decision was to pass the case back to an Ontario trial judge that had just begun a preliminary hearing.

In this case, a Muslim woman sought to wear a niqab while testifying against two men she claims sexually assaulted her when she was a child.

The two men claim the Charter allows them to confront their accuser and observe her facial expressions as she testifies. Due to a publication ban, the woman can only be identified as N.S.

A sharply divided Supreme Court of Canada was not able to definitively rule Thursday whether a woman can wear a religious veil known as a niqab while testifying in court.
MAYA ALLERUZZO/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin wrote for the majority and affirmed the two Charter rights, saying both should receive the fullest possible expression.

McLachlin spelled out a four-step analysis that the judge at N.S.'s preliminary hearing can now use to determine the issue.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Slain teacher protected students from gunman

Mourners exit a church in Katonah, N.Y., after the funeral for Anne Marie Murphy on Thursday. Murphy was killed when Adam Lanza walked into Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., Dec. 14, and opened fire.
LINDSAY NIEGELBERG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sandy Hook shooting.
52-year-old one of six educators killed in Newtown massacre

A teacher who authorities said died trying to protect her students in the Connecticut school shooting that left 28 people dead was laid to rest Thursday.

Anne Marie Murphy, 52, was remembered as a teacher who "brought together a community, a nation, a world, now awed by her own life and death," in a eulogy by Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York.

Murphy's father, Hugh McGowan, said authorities told him that she died trying to protect her young pupils. Her body was found covering a group of children's bodies as if to shield them, McGowan said.

About 15 people arrived at St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Katonah, N.Y., in a yellow school bus with "Newtown," the name of the Connecticut town where the shooting occurred, written on its side. The church quickly filled and about 100 mourners waited outside.

A Justice Department official said the country's top lawyer, Attorney General Eric Holder, would visit the town Thursday to meet privately with first responders and law enforcement officials.

At least nine funerals and wakes were held Wednesday for those who died when 20-year-old gunman Adam Lanza, armed with a military-style assault rifle, broke into Sandy Hook Elementary School and opened fire. He killed six adults and 20 children, all of them six or seven years old.

More tributes were scheduled for Friday and Saturday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Archbishop

"Annie's life and death brings light, truth ... and love to a world often shrouded in darkness ..."
Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York

LONDON TRANSIT NEWS

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S EVE SERVICE

Christmas Day December 25 (Tuesday)

For Christmas Day, December 25 the following routes will operate on special schedules:

1 Kipps Lane
2 Dundas
3 Hamilton Rd.
4 Oxford East
6 Richmond
7 Wavell
9C Whitehills
15 Westmount
16 Adelaide
20 Cherryhill
21 Huron Heights

The following routes will operate on a regular Sunday/Holiday schedules:

5 Springbank
10 Wonderland
11 Southcrest
12 Wharncliffe
13 Wellington
14 Highbury
17 Oxford West
26 Jalna

On December 27, 28 and January 2 all routes will operate on a regular schedule

Boxing Day, December 26 (Wednesday)

For December 26, all routes (except 2 Dundas and 13 Wellington) will operate on regular Sunday/Holiday schedule. Routes 2 Dundas and 13 Wellington will use a special schedule with extra buses.

Free New Year's Eve Service After 8 pm

London Transit will be offering free rides from 8 pm through 1 am on New Year's Eve. All routes normally operating at 11 pm will be extended to 1 am.

On January 1 all routes will operate on a Sunday/Holiday schedule

Separate Christmas and New Year's Eve schedules will be available after December 15 at both LTC locations (main office at 450 Highbury Avenue and downtown Ticket Office at 150 Dundas Street) and online at www.ltconline.ca.

London Transit wishes you and yours a safe and happy holiday!

my bus info

Grounded. Snowstorm in U.S. Midwest leaves travellers stranded

The first widespread snowstorm of the season plodded across the Midwest on Thursday, as whiteout conditions sent drivers sliding over slick roads and some travellers were forced to scramble for alternate ways to get to their holiday destinations.

The storm, which dumped a foot of snow in parts of Iowa and Wisconsin, was part of a system that began in the Rockies earlier in the week before trekking into the Midwest. It was expected to move across the Great Lakes overnight before moving into Canada.

The storm led airlines to cancel about 1,000 flights ahead of the Christmas holiday — relatively few compared to past big storms, though the number was climbing.

Most of the cancelled flights were at Chicago's O'Hare and Midway international airports. At O'Hare, many people were taking the cancellations in stride and the normally busy airport was much quieter than normal Thursday evening.

Aprielle Kugler said she was considering taking a bus to Des Moines on Friday morning to visit her boyfriend after she had two flights cancelled out of O'Hare. Sitting on top of her luggage, the 18-year-old from Wisconsin said her mom shovelled more than a foot of snow out of the family's driveway that morning to drive her to Chicago for her flight.

The storm made travel difficult from Kansas to Wisconsin, forcing road closures. Iowa and Wisconsin activated National Guard troops to help rescue stranded drivers.

In Iowa, two people were killed and seven injured in a 25-vehicle pileup. Drivers were blinded by blowing snow and didn't see vehicles that had slowed or stopped on Interstate 35, about 60 miles north of Des Moines, state police said. A chain reaction of crashes involving semitrailers and passenger cars closed down a section of the highway.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fatalities

- Along with Thursday's fatal accident in Iowa, the storm was blamed for traffic deaths in Nebraska, Kansas and Wisconsin.
- In southeastern Utah, a woman who tried to walk for help after her car became stuck in snow died Tuesday night.

Increased flu cases

Sick? Stay home for the holidays

Health officials say flu activity seems to be surging just in time for the holidays in several parts of the country.

They are suggesting that people who haven't received a flu shot can still get one.

And they are urging people who are sick not to visit elderly relatives or attend holiday gatherings.

Infectious diseases expert Dr. Michael Gardam says taking part in holiday social events when you are sick is being unfair to others who attend.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Female circumcision

UN calls for global genital mutilation ban

The UN General Assembly unanimously approved a resolution Thursday calling for a global ban on female genital mutilation, a centuries-old practice stemming from the belief that circumcising girls controls women's sexuality and enhances fertility. It has also been linked to religious and cultural practices, although Muslim and Christian leaders have spoken out against it. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Y kant Canaydians spel? Blame it on the Internet

Disappearing skills.
Digital life is ruining our ability to do basic tasks such as spell properly, recall phone numbers and write by hand

A woman types while surfing the Internet in North Vancouver on Wednesday. Our continued reliance on technology means we're no longer very good at undertaking manual, old-fashioned tasks. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadians may be among the world's most prolific Internet users, but it seems all that time online hasn't made us a nation of careful spellers.

Many of us often type "facebok" into Google and rather than correcting the obvious mistake, let the search engine fix it. Monitoring Canadians' search habits would reveal that many, many more consistently type in "faceboo," "faebook" and "fcaebook" — but they know Google will get the point.

Others can't be bothered to tap out even eight characters and have learned that entering just "face" or "fb" will get them exactly the link they're seeking.

Is that lazy or efficient? Should we be thanking Google's engineers for saving us a few seconds or lament that technology is dooming us to intellectual laziness?

It seems hardly anyone can remember phone numbers anymore since we starting storing them in our mobile phones.

Outside of schools and some workplaces, the practice of putting pen to paper is becoming increasingly rare. To many, scribbling with a pen feels quaint in today's digital age.

Who needs maps and a sense of direction with GPS technology — which is now nearly ubiquitous on smartphones and tablets — to guide the way?

And now voice-recognition software is exploding in efficiency and popularity, raising the prospect that typing could eventually become another skill that's made redundant by convenient, task-relieving technology.

For Matthew Thomas, 33, it was the signing of a birthday card that made him consider just how infrequent old-fashioned manual tasks like handwriting have become in his typical routine.

"I realized how rarely I'm actually ever writing anything by hand and there was like a moment of panic where I felt a little scared because as I was writing I was having a hard time," Thomas said, noting that he felt the need to concentrate more and think about the act of writing compared to the automatic process of typing.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"When you're typing ... you don't have to think — (and autocorrect) thinks for you. So I was like, 'Wow, I'm really scary now when I don't have Google or spellcheck to help me out.'"
Matthew Thomas, 33

Wireless industry. Data use fuels revenue growth

Here's my cell number. Call me, maybe? Or maybe not. Cellphone users are doing less calling as they buy more smartphones and use the device for texting, emailing, web surfing, mobile apps, social networking and watching videos.

And it's that surge in data use that Canada's telecom companies — big and small — are banking on as the revenue driver of the future.

"It's no longer just your teenage kids. It's everybody," telecom analyst Brahm Eiley said. "They use their phone the way they would use their PC," he added.

Dan Maitland has an iPhone and hardly uses it for calls. "These are not just phones," said Maitland, 39, who makes software that helps train pilots to be safer at flight simulator company CAE Inc. in Montreal.

"They are small computers that have the ability to make a phone call."

Maitland said he uses his iPhone for such things as web searches, apps, accessing files for work and reading.

And Maitland is doing exactly what wireless providers expect and want him to do to help increase their data revenues in the years ahead.

Faster wireless networks are also helping drive the increasing use of data by consumers, Eiley added. THE CANADIAN PRESS

By the numbers

55%

The Convergence Consulting Group expects that about 55 per cent of all cellphone users in Canada will have smartphones by the end of this year. That's expected to increase to 65 per cent by the end of 2013 and go up to 80 per cent by year-end 2016.

Market Minute

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Dairy producers

Farmers depend on eggnog rush

As you raise a glass of eggnog over the holidays, consider that you're making the season brighter for the country's farmers.

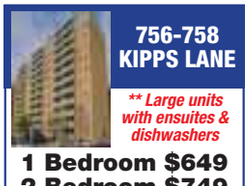
There's typically a decline in milk consumption over the holiday period as people turn to boozy beverages, and some dairy producers say eggnog sales are key in offsetting that slump.

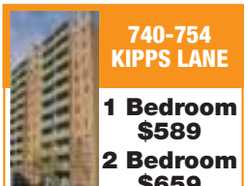
Andrew Taylor, plant manager at Hewitt's Dairy in Hagersville, Ont. said the operation sees an increase of 10 to 15 per cent in sales — usually lasting from the beginning of December until early January — and that eggnog is the beverage behind the jump.

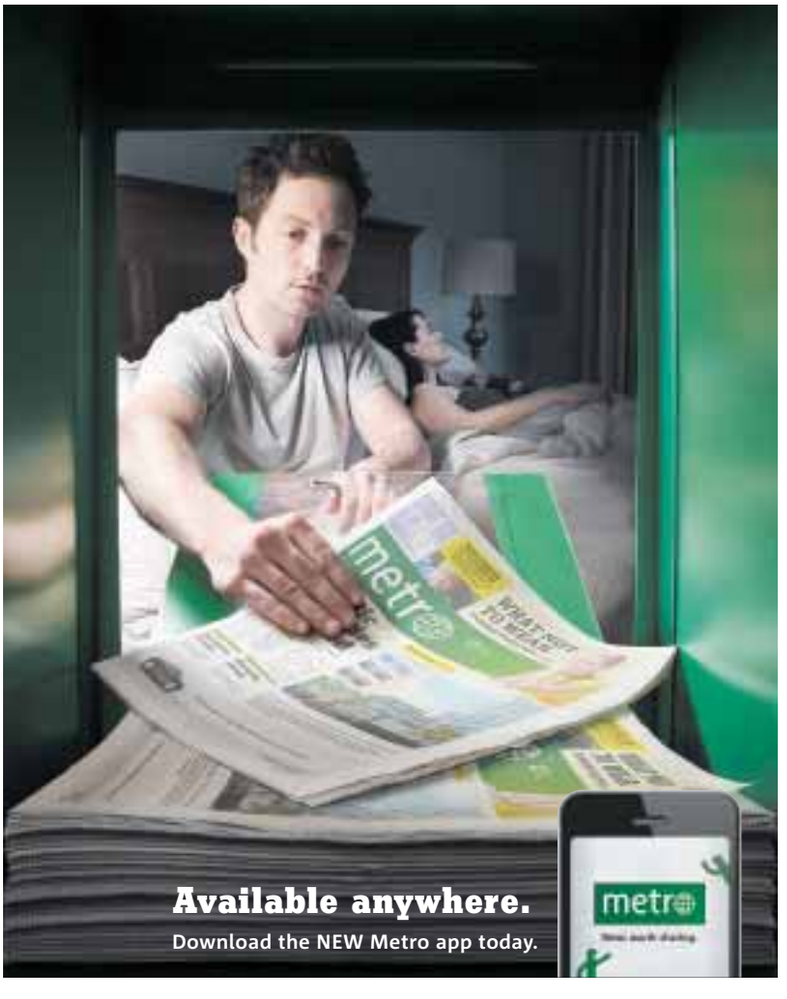
"Overall milk sales tend to fall in December as people tend to drink other things, usually an alcoholic beverage, so anything that compensates for that is something that we look forward to," said Taylor.

"We rely on (eggnog). Farmers need a consistent market and it helps to maintain that consistency."

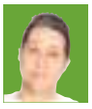
MORGAN MODJESKI/
METRO IN SASKATOON







MAPLE SYRUP HEIST, RAPTORS BACK ON THE BALL AND A TOP-10 HIT



THE LIST
Mike Benhaim
metronews.ca

1 **Say what?** South African President Jacob Zuma maintains leadership of the currently-ruling African National Congress party by defeating deputy president Kgalema Motlanthe with a dubious 75 per cent majority vote. Perhaps it's just that the robocalls had trouble pronouncing the name Kgalema Motlanthe.

2 **Slap-happy.** Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh have created a sophisticated prosthetic arm that can translate brain signals into the appropriate movements. While a definite boon for the physically challenged, I raise two concerns: You just know some rich guy is eventually going to buy a couple of extra arms for no good reason, and someone having a bad dream will end up slapping the heck out of their bed-partner.

3 **Holy crepes.** After a huge manhunt, Quebec police have arrested more than a dozen accused assailants in what will one day be known as The Great Maple Syrup Heist of 2012. Officers also recovered important paraphernalia used in the production of maple syrup, and around $18 million worth of our nation's most delicious natural resource (I believe that's street value). The province has been dealing with controversies over corruption and organized crime, but they'll be damned if they are going to sit by and let citizens endure Christmas with dry, unsavoury pancakes.

4 **Bac off.** Dollarama has pulled two brands of cleansing wipes from its shelves after tests by CBC News revealed unacceptable levels of bacteria. It's reassuring to know that all of the other products we use to rid our skin of impurities contain "acceptable" levels of bacteria.

5 **Kill me maybe?** The votes are in, and Carly Rae Jepsen's Call Me Maybe is the song of the year. While I am pleased for our homegirl, after the millionth listen I respectfully request, for the love of God, that someone call this girl already!

6 **Fields of dreams.** The Toronto Raptors welcomed back Landry Fields, who was cleared by team doctors after undergoing elbow surgery over a month ago. The team is on a four-game winning streak, and Fields is anxious to jump in and get them back to their comfort zone.

7 **Winter wonders.** Monkeys shopping, eagles snatching babies, cows falling from trucks ... It brings to mind fond memories of something my mother used to say: "If your flying baby cries over a truckload of spilled cows, no one's ever going to buy your sharp-dressed monkey." In fairness, English was not her first language.

8 **And the winner is ...** Cassadee Pope. Pope is now officially The Voice. Fans voted for The Personality as well, but to me she'll always be The Legs. Congrats Cassadee.

9 **My favourite things.** This week in 1985, Born in the U.S.A. by Bruce Springsteen surpassed Michael Jackson's Thriller as the second-longest-lasting album on Billboard's American Top 10. It stayed there for 79 weeks. So what mega-singing sensation was powerful enough to top these two superstars for the honour of being No. 1? At 109 consecutive weeks ... Julie Andrews with The Sound of Music. Of course it was.

Follow The Metro List on Twitter @TheMetroList

Julie Andrews' The Sound of Music topped Bruce Springsteen's Born in the U.S.A. and Michael Jackson's Thriller on Billboard's Top 10 in 1985. CONTRIBUTED

May your days be merry and bright

MATT YORK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Christmas circuit

Don't get blinded by the lights

A woman walks along Natal Circle viewing Christmas lights in Gilbert, Ariz., in this photo taken earlier this month.

As Christmas decorations light up across the globe, take these precautions to avoid a holiday mishap.

• **Sparkle without the spark.** Turn off the electricity to the supply outlet before working with outdoor wiring. Unplug light strings before replacing bulbs and check to ensure replacement bulbs match the voltage and wattage of the original. To avoid a shock from damaged wire, use insulated fasteners rather than metal nails or tacks to hold light strings in place.

• **Stay dry.** Keep electrical connectors for outdoor lights above ground, out of water, and away from metal eavestroughs. Connect outdoor lighting into receptacles protected by weatherproof ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI). These can provide protection from electric shock by sensing ground leakage and cutting electrical power.

• **Put your faith in the magic of the holidays but don't fall for fakes.** Avoid counterfeit electronic decorations that haven't been certified for safe use. Look for the mark from an accredited certification organization like CSA Group.

NEWS CANADA

Pales in comparison

Neighbour cops out on lights

An Arizona woman who knew she couldn't compete head-on with her neighbour's elaborate Christmas light display is attracting attention for her response.

Using red and green lights, Kristina Green of Maricopa, Ariz., spelled out the word "ditto" and made an arrow pointing toward her neighbour's home.

KNXV-TV reports that Green's display is made of around 600 lights. Her neighbour's setup has about 16,000 colourful lights. Green has created a Facebook page for her "ditto" sign.

The Christmas light competition heats up for some neighbourhoods, while other neighbours go with a "ditto" sign and an arrow. SCREEN GRAB

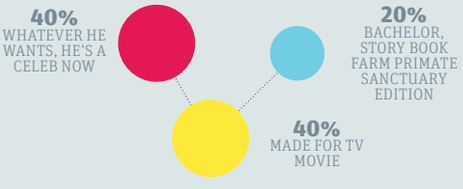
Last year, a family in Beaverton, Ore., also erected the word "ditto" with an arrow on the side of their own home toward a neighbour's house as part of an online movement.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

What's next for the Ikea Monkey?



Twitter

@Francisco_Cux: 12/21/2012 one day left, do all the crazy things that I've wanted to do.umm.Like streaking,confess feelings to that special person! #LdnOnt

@mishyme: Seeking dynamic, enthusiastic Travel Manager for CAA in London. Msg me or visit caasco.ca for details! #ttot #ldnont

@TothSusan: Made my first mistake at work today. Learning to take responsibility, apologize but then move on and not dwell in it. #noteasy

@lawvitorleaveit: No desire to work right now

@nevesmommy: Considering Netflix for the winter boredom months. Any opinions? On Netflix, not winter boredom. Lol

metro

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This is 40 sees Paul Rudd and Leslie Mann reprise their roles as the warring couple in Knocked Up. HANDOUT

Reel Guys

RICHARD CROUSE AND MARK BRESLIN

This is all too familiar

Biting honesty.
Judd Apatow's latest comedy pleases with its realistic take on life in middle age

Richard: Mark, after writing that synopsis, I feel it necessary to remind everyone that this is a comedy, so mixed into this study of midlife disappointment are some keenly honed and very funny observations. It's a blend of heart and humour, frequently in the same scene, and often in the same sentence. When Pete says to Debbie, "We're like Simon and Garfunkle and you turned me into Garfunkle," it's a funny line, delivered well, but also a loaded one that places his unhappiness front and centre. It's that kind of writing and performance that makes you laugh and cringe at the same time. What did you think?

Mark: It's Apatow's best movie, but not necessarily his funniest. The comedy comes intermittently in between stretches of a married couple bickering, experiencing a financial meltdown, problems with their kids and their parents. Just like real life. But I'm not sure the very funny comedy bits redeem the rest of the movie's grim and lacerating honesty.

RC: I think Apatow is trying to get that James Brooks magical mix of funny and raw emotion. The ratio might be a bit off here, but his cast — Rudd and Mann — both bring considerable likeability and comic chops, but temper that with resentment and dissatisfaction. Mann is particularly good. A scene with a hockey player who doesn't realize she is married is funny but framed with a kind of vulnerability that elevates Debbie from stock character to believable person.

MB: I found this movie less sentimental than most of Brooks' work, but the cast does make the bitter pill seem a bit sweeter. Not just Rudd and Mann, but the smaller parts — Albert Brooks and John Lithgow as their respective fathers, Jason Segel as the insufferable personal trainer and Apatow's own daughters as the couple's siblings, all work wonders. And two comic set pieces late in the movie — when most directors would be sprinting to the finish line — one with Charlene Yi, the other with Melissa McCarthy — are comedy gold. Your favourite funny bit?

RC: I loved everything to do with the Graham Parker storyline. As the retro rock act Rudd's character is trying to promote, Parker — who was one of my 1970s real-life punk rock heroes — gamely allows himself to be the butt of a lot of jokes, including my favourite from Chris O'Dowd, who says, "It's hard to watch a band when you know all of them were alive on D Day."

MB: Casting Parker was such an inspired choice! I hope that life will imitate art and people will get interested in his music again. But the movie is full of such inspired offbeat picks. That was Tatum O'Neal as the realtor and radio talkshow hero Phil Hendrie who attacks Rudd after the bicycle crash.

Synopsis

This is 40 takes place in the week between Pete and Debbie's (Paul Rudd and Leslie Mann reprising their roles from Knocked Up) 40th birthdays. Although Debbie lies about how old she is, larger problems include constantly warring kids (Maude and Iris Apatow), an empty bank account made worse by a freeloading father (Albert Brooks), an embezzling employee and relationship doubts triggered by Debbie's loaded question, "If I hadn't gotten pregnant 14 years ago, would we still be together?"

- Richard: ●●●●○
- Mark: ●●●●○

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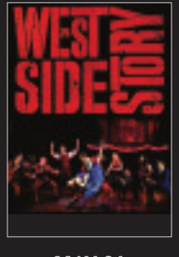
MARCH 21

APRIL 13

APRIL 30



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The bad. Films that brought us to tears in 2012

Tom Cruise in a campy rock musical. Can it get any worse? HANDOUT

There are a lot of ways to qualify a bad film, which led to some entries not making this list. Some films disappoint by wasting talent and prestige, like the Hobbit, while others come from such uninspired origins that it seems pointless to complain about them. Then there are these 10, which are just plain bad.

Prometheus
This one might not be as objectively bad as others on the list, but it failed on a much grander scale, taking a beloved science fiction franchise, a talented cast and gorgeous cinematography and creating maddeningly thoughtless dreck. Worst of all, a film that was meant to be a prequel ends instead with a presumptuous setup for a sequel. A note to director Ridley Scott: That's not up to you.

One for the Money
This turkey kicked off the year in January and nearly held the title for year's worst the whole way through. Katherine Heigl's attempt to launch herself a franchise based on Janet Evanovich's books is clumsy, painful and plodding, inspiring contempt from its viewers.

Rock of Ages
The poppy hair metal of the 1980s — already not the most soulful music in the world — has any life drained out of it completely in this painfully campy, overlong and uneven trudge down the Sunset Strip. Alec Baldwin and Catherine Zeta-Jones just look embarrassed to be there, and Tom Cruise should be, considering his performance. This movie — storyline and all — was better last year when it was called Burlesque.

Savages
Oliver Stone's over-saturated, bombastic drug war fantasy is filled with overwrought melodrama, empty tough-guy posturing and an ending that is beyond frustrating. But the worst aspect of the film can be summed up in three words: Blake Lively narration.

What to Expect When You're Expecting
Basing an ensemble comedy on a pregnancy manual was probably the first mistake. The second was thinking any of the shrill and unsympathetic characters on display are at all entertaining. NED EHRBAR, MWN

Rounding out the 10 worst

- American Reunion
- The Raven
- Alex Cross
- Red Dawn
- The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn — Part 2

Metro's 10 must-see films from the past year

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

This may finally be the year that well-made big-budget studio fare finally gets some respect, a cause championed by the likes of Christopher Nolan. Which is awkward, because we were expecting more from his Dark Knight Rises, but he didn't quite stick the landing. If nothing else, 2012 proved to be a delightfully diverse year at the movies. Some runners up for this list include best picture front-runner Argo, Michael Haneke's Cannes favourite Amour and Quentin Tarantino's Django Unchained.

Cloud Atlas
A big, bold, far-reaching tale encompassing six different stories — and six very different visual and genre styles — to explore the enduring power of love and mankind's struggle for freedom. The Wachowskis and co-director Tom Tykwer packed a lot into their 172 minutes, adapting David Mitchell's gorgeous novel into something vital and engrossing.

Zero Dark Thirty
Director Kathryn Bigelow and screenwriter Mark Boal follow up their wins for the Hurt Locker with an even better film tracking the decade-long manhunt for Osama Bin Laden, buoyed by a performance by Jessica Chastain that should earn her a best actress Oscar. The film's greatest feat is presenting all of the facts without an ounce of politicization.

The Impossible
This true-life tale of a European family separated during the 2004 tsunami is incredibly manipulative, but it is some of the most artful, effective manipulation ever committed to film, and for that it deserves respect. It's a harrowing, unflinching look at the struggle for survival that puts viewers through the emotional wringer.

Beasts of the Southern Wild
A startling debut with a six-year-old unknown star (Quvenzhané Wallis) and a look and feel unlike anything seen before, this charming and moving fable is a rare treasure, a visual poem with an equally enduring score co-written by director and co-writer Benh Zeitlin.

Cabin in the Woods
Joss Whedon had one of the year's biggest hits with the Avengers — which nearly made this list as well — but his real triumph this year comes in co-writing this sharp and hilarious deconstruction of the horror movie genre. Once the movie's real game is revealed, the film's giddy energy is infectious.

Rust and Bone
Oscar-winner Marion Cotillard turns in another striking and poignant performance as a whale trainer who loses her legs during an accident at work and rediscovers the beauty of life with the help of a down-on-his-luck bruiser of a single father (Matthais Schoenaerts).

Lincoln
Daniel Day-Lewis is of course the main attraction here, seamlessly transforming himself into the 16th president, but he shares the screen with a dizzying array of fantastic supporting performances, the best of which was Tommy Lee Jones, Lee Pace and James Spader.

Keep the Lights On
Writer-director Ira Sachs mines his own romantic past with aching honesty to tell the story of two men trying to love each other and ignore each other's addictions for nearly a decade. It's an unflinching portrayal of intimacy.

Beasts of the Southern Wild. HANDOUT

Jessica Chastain's performance in Zero Dark Thirty is Oscar worthy. HANDOUT

Anna Karenina
Director Joe Wright and actress Keira Knightley team up for their third literary adaptation — after Pride and Prejudice and Atonement — with this gorgeous and risky translation of the Russian classic. The staging and style are mesmerizing, and Knightley shines, but the real standout here is Jude Law in a career-redefining turn as the cuckolded Alexei Karenin.

Skyfall
Sam Mendes leads the James Bond franchise to a new benchmark in quality just in time for its 50th anniversary, imbuing Daniel Craig's 007 with just the right amount of fun and '60s swagger. A delicious turn by Javiar Bardem as the villain and Roger Deakins' gorgeous cinematography help elevate it to something even more.

From writer/director JUDD APATOW

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Action

Django Unchained

Director. Quentin Tarantino

Stars. Jamie Foxx, Christoph Waltz

Whatever you think of Quentin Tarantino, his movies stand out in an industry full of mediocrity. Django Unchained, the filmmaker's homage to the spaghetti western, is certainly no different — casting Jamie Foxx as the titular slave-turned-bounty hunter. Aided by a smooth-talking "dentist" (Waltz), Django strives to save his wife from a plantation owner played by Leonardo Dicaprio. Hypnotic dialogue and Tarantino's sense of retro-style keep Django smartly entertaining, albeit a bit long at 165 minutes. **STEVE GOW**

Action

Jack Reacher

Director. Christopher McQuarrie

Stars. Tom Cruise, Rosamund Pike

Tom Cruise channels the macho swagger of John Wayne and Robert Mitchum in this refreshingly unpretentious, highly entertaining mystery thriller. Cruise plays an ex-military cop who is called in to aid defense lawyer Rosamund Pike in profiling another soldier who has murdered five civilians. Of course there's more to the serpentine case than meets the eye. Jack Reacher gets an extra star for casting cult German director Werner Herzog as a reptilian psychopath.
CHRIS ALEXANDER

Drama

Cirque du Soleil: Worlds Away

Director. Andrew Adamson

Stars. Erica Linz, Igor Zaripov

The problem with making a Cirque du Soleil movie is that the company's acrobatic shows are more spectacle than the medium of cinema truly allows. And these days, that's saying something. Worlds Away (which is a virtual "greatest hits" from seven Cirque shows) tries to thread a narrative throughout, but even that's lost amongst the thrilling stunts that are still more impressive on stage than in a 3D film.
STEVE GOW

Musical

Les Misérables

Director. Tom Hooper

Stars. Hugh Jackman, Russell Crowe, Anne Hathaway

Chances are, if you're excited to see Les Misérables, you already know what you're in for. Based on the hugely popular stage play, this brooding musical (there are no dance numbers here, folks) stars Jackman as a reformed thief who adopts the daughter of a prostitute in the years following the French Revolution. There's no denying the grandiosity of staging and the device using actors' live vocals leads to impressive performances, but the windy one-takes are just as wearisome.
STEVE GOW

Drama

A Late Quartet

Director. Yaron Zilberman

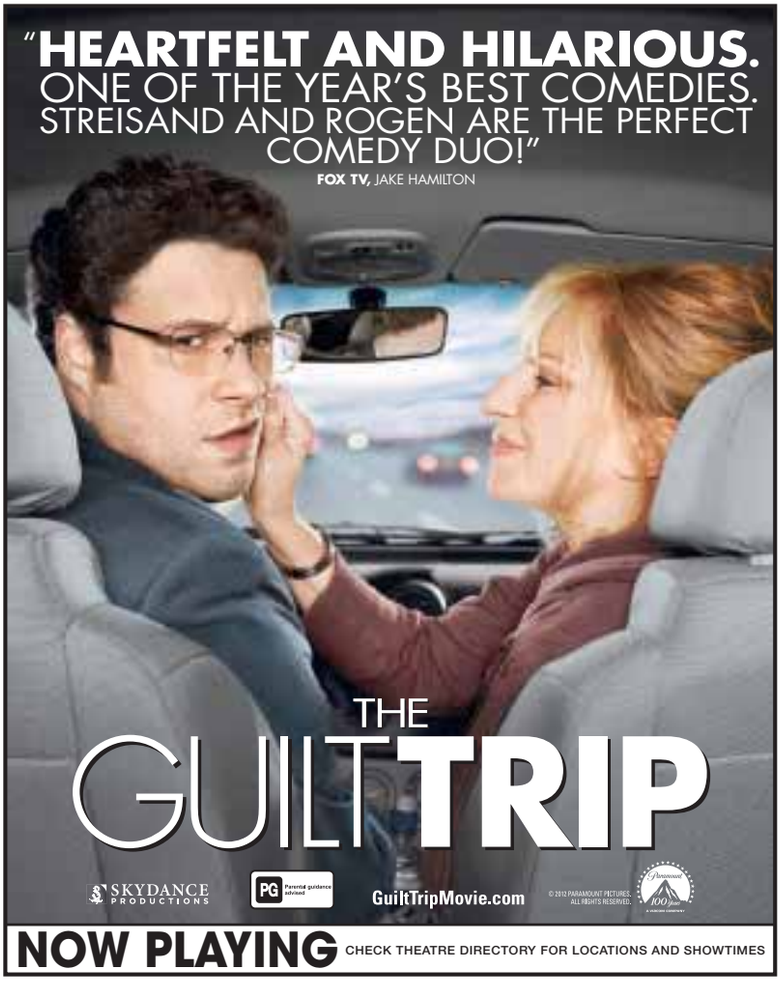
Stars. Philip Seymour Hoffman, Mark Ivanir, Catherine Keener and Christopher Walken

Framed by Beethoven's Opus 131 String Quartet in C-sharp minor, the film focuses on members of a world-renowned string quartet struggling with change as they enter their 25th season. Walken, the group's cellist and leader, is diagnosed with career-ending Parkinson's, and sets off a chain reaction of sexual, artistic and professional tensions pent up for 25 years. It's an odd but well-balanced tale of elite artistry and domestic melodrama.
ANNE BRODIE

Parental Guidance

Parental Guidance, featuring Billy Crystal, Marisa Tomei and Bette Midler opens Christmas Day. Visit metronews.ca/scene to read our review of the film.

HANDOUT PHOTO



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London

Hyland Cinema
240 Wharncliffe Road South, 519-913-0313

Anna Karenina (14A) Fri 2:40 Sat 1 Sun 9 Wed 2:40 Thu 9
Hitchcock (PG) Fri 12:50-7-9 Sat 3:20-5:10-7 Sun 1-3-7 Mon 3-4:50-9:10 Tue 9 Wed 12:50-5-9 Thu 3-5-7
It's a Wonderful Life (STC) Mon 6:40
A Late Quartet (18A) Fri 5 Sat 9 Sun 5 Mon 1 Tue-Wed 7 Thu 1

Rainbow Cinemas London
355 Wellington St., 519-434-3073

Django Unchained (18A) Tue 4:15-7:40 Wed-Thu 1-4:15-7:40
Elf (G) Sat 10:30
The Guilt Trip (PG) Fri-Sun 1:20-3:40-7:10-9:30 Mon 1:20-3:40 Tue 3:40-7:10 Wed-Thu 1:20-3:40-7:10-9:30
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 12:50-3:15-4:10-7:30-9:15 No Passes Mon 12:50-3:15 No Passes Tue 4:10-7:35 No Passes Wed-Thu 12:50-4:10-7:35
Jack Reacher (14A) Fri-Sun 1:10-4-7-9:50 Mon 1:10-4 Tue 4-7 Wed-Thu 1:10-4-7-9:50
Lincoln (PG) Fri-Sun 12:45-3:45-6:50-9:45 Mon 12:45-3:45
Les Misérables (PG) Tue 4:05-7:30 Wed-Thu 12:55-4:05-7:30
Parental Guidance (G) Fri-Sun 1:15-3:45-7:05-9:35 Mon 1:15-3:45 Tue 3:45-7:05 Wed-Thu 1:15-3:45-7:05-9:35
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri-Mon 1:15-3:35
Skyfall (PG) Fri-Thu 6:55-9:45
This Is 40 (14A) Fri-Sun 1:05-3:55-6:55-9:45 Mon 1:05-3:55 Tue 3:55-6:55 Wed-Thu 1:05-3:55-6:55-9:45
Western Film
Room 340, UCC Building,
No Films Showing Today (STC)
Fri-Thu

Wellington 8 Cinemas
983 Wellington Rd. S, 519-685-2529

Django Unchained (18A) No Passes Tue 4:15-8:15 No Passes Wed-Thu 12:15-4:15-8:15
The Guilt Trip (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 1:10-4:10-7:15-9:45 No Passes Mon 1:10-4:10-7:15 No Passes Tue-Thu 4:10-7:15-9:45
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (PG) Fri-Sun 12-4-8 Mon 12-6:45 Wed-Thu 12:30
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 12:30-4:20-8:30 Mon 12:30-4:20 Tue-Thu 4:20-8:30
Jack Reacher (14A) No Passes Fri-Sun 12:20-3:40-7-10 No Passes Mon 12:20-3:40-7 No Passes Tue 3:40-7-10 No Passes Wed-Thu 12:20-3:40-7-10

The Hobbit is a coming-of-age story for Bilbo Baggins. HANDOUT

Life of Pi 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 12:40-3:45-6:40-9:30 Mon 12:40-3:45-6:40
Les Misérables (PG) No Passes Tue 4-8 No Passes Wed-Thu 12-4-8
Monsters, Inc. 3D (G) Fri-Sun 1-3:50-7:10-9:40 Mon 1-3:50-7:10 Tue 3:50-7:10-9:40 Wed-Thu 1-3:50-7:10-9:40
Parental Guidance (G) No Passes Tue 3:20-6:40-9:30 No Passes Wed-Thu 12:40-3:20-6:40-9:30
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri-Mon 12:50-3:20-6:30 Wed-Thu 12:50
Skyfall (PG) Fri-Sun 9:10
This Is 40 (14A) No Passes Fri-Sun 12:10-3:30-6:45-9:55 No Passes Mon 12:10-3:30-6:45 No Passes Tue 3:30-6:45-9:55 No Passes Wed-Thu 12:10-3:30-6:45-9:55

Cineplex Odeon Westmount & VIP Cinemas
755 Wonderland Road South, 519-474-2796

Django Unchained (18A) Tue 3:05-6:50-10:35 Wed-Thu 11:20-3:05-6:50-10:35 Tue 4-7:30-11:05 Wed-Thu 12:10-3:45-7:20-10:55
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (PG) No Passes Fri 6:15-10 No Passes Sat-Sun 2:30-6:15-10 No Passes Mon 2:30-6:15 No Passes Tue 6:30-10:15 No Passes Wed-Thu 11-2:45-6:30-10:15
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 3-6:45-10:30 No Passes Mon 3-6:45 No Passes Tue 3:15-7-10:45 No Passes Wed-Thu 11:30-3:15-7-10:45 No Passes Fri 3:10-6-7-9:40-10:40 No Passes Sat-Mon 12:30 No Passes Tue 3:30-7-10:40 No Passes Wed-Thu 11:40-3:15-6:50-10:25 No Passes Sat-Sun 2-3-6-7-9:40-10:40 No Passes Mon 2-3-6-7
Life of Pi 3D (PG) Fri 4:10-7:10-10:10 Sat-Sun 12-4:10-7:10-10:10 Mon 12-4:10-7:10
Lincoln (PG) Tue 3:40-7:10-10:40 Wed-Thu 12:15-3:40-7:10-10:40
Les Misérables (PG) No Passes Tue 2:55-6:40-10:25 No Passes Wed-Thu 11:10-2:55-6:40-10:25 No Passes Tue 3-6:30-10 No Passes Wed-Thu 11:10-2:45-6:20-9:50
Parental Guidance (G) No Passes Tue 5-7:40-10:20 No Passes Wed-Thu 11:45-2:20-5-7:40-10:20
Playing for Keeps (PG) Fri-Sat 5:05-7:40-10:25 Sun 11:55-2:25-5:05-7:40-10:25 Mon 11:55-2:25-5:05-7:40
Rise of the Guardians (G) Sat-Mon 12 Tue 4:40 Wed-Thu 11:25-2-4:40
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri 5-7:30-10:05 Sat-Sun 2:30-5-7:30-10:05 Mon 2:30-5-7:30
Royal Opera House: The Nutcracker (STC) Sat 12:55
Silver Linings Playbook (14A) Fri 4:20-7:20-10:20 Sat-Sun 1:20-4:20-7:20-10:20 Mon 1:20-4:20-7:20 Tue 4:35-7:30-10:30 Wed-Thu 11-1:45-4:35-7:30-10:30
Skyfall (PG) Fri 3:40-7-10:15 Sat 1:45-3:45-7-10:15 Sun 12:20-3:40-7-10:15 Mon 12:20-3:40-7 Tue-Thu 7:20-10:50 Fri 3:30-6:30-10:10 Sat-Sun 12:30-3:30-6:30-10:10 Mon 12:30-3:30-6:30
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (PG) Fri 4:50-7:45-10:35 Sat-Sun 2-4:50-7:45-10:35 Mon 2-4:50-7:45

SilverCity London
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Django Unchained (18A) Tue 3:15-6:50-10:35 Wed-Thu 11:20-3:05-6:50-10:35
Elf (G) Sat 11
The Guilt Trip (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 12:30-3-5:30-8-10:30 No Passes Mon 12:05-2:35-5:05-7:40 No Passes Tue 3:30-5:55-8:20-10:50 No Passes Wed-Thu 12:15-2:50-5:25-8-10:30
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (PG) No Passes Fri-Sat 12-2-3:45-5:50-7:30-9:30-11:15 No Passes Sun 12-2-3:45-5:50-7:30-9:30 No Passes Mon 12-2-3:45-5:50-7:30 No Passes Tue 5:50-9:30 No Passes Wed-Thu 2-5:50-9:30
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey — An IMAX 3D Experience (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 11:30-3:15-7-10:45 No Passes Mon 11:30-3:15-7 No Passes Tue 3:15-7-10:45 No Passes Wed-Thu 11:30-3:15-7-10:45
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (PG) No Passes Fri 2:45-6:30-10:15 No Passes Sat 11-2:45-6:30-10:15 No Passes Sun 2:45-6:30-10:15 No Passes Mon 2:45-6:30 No Passes Tue 4-6:30-10:15 No Passes Wed-Thu 11-2:45-6:30-10:15
Jack Reacher (14A) No Passes Fri 11:45-1:50-4:50-7:50-11 No Passes Sat 10:55-1:50-4:50-7:50-11 No Passes Sun 1:50-4:50-7:50-10:45 No Passes Mon 1:50-4:50-7:50 No Passes Tue 4:50-7:55-11 No Passes Wed-Thu 10:55-1:50-4:50-7:55-11
Life of Pi 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 1-3:55-6:55-9:55 Mon 1-3:55-6:55 Tue-Thu 8:15-11
Lincoln (PG) Fri-Sun 12:50-4:05-7:15-10:35 Mon 12:50-4:05-7:15
Les Misérables (PG) No Passes Tue 3:20-6:55-10:25 No Passes Wed-Thu 11:10-2:55-6:40-10:25
Monsters, Inc. 3D (G) Fri-Sun 11:30-2:05-4:55-7:35-10:10 Mon 11:30-2:05-4:55-7:35 Tue 3:45-7:35-10:10 Wed-Thu 11:25-2:05-4:55-7:35-10:10
Parental Guidance (G) No Passes Tue 4:20-7:15-10 No Passes Wed-Thu 11:55-2:35-5:20-8:05-10:40
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri 11:50 Sat 11:10-11:50 Sun-Mon 11:50 Tue 3:40-5:55 Wed-Thu 11:05-11:40-1:20-3:30-5:45
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri-Sat 2:15-4:40-7:10-9:40 Sun 12:15-2:15-4:40-7:10-9:40 Mon 12:15-2:15-4:40-7:10
Skyfall (PG) Fri 12:40-4-7:45-10:55 Sat 1:20-4:30-7:40-10:55 Sun 12:40-4-7:20-10:25 Mon 12:40-4-7:20 Tue 4-7:20-10:55 Wed-Thu 12:40-4-7:20-10:55
This Is 40 (14A) No Passes Fri-Sat 1:30-4:35-7:40-10:50 No Passes Sun 1:10-4:20-7:25-10:40 No Passes Mon 1:10-4:20-7:25 No Passes Tue 4:10-7:25-10:40 No Passes Wed-Thu 1:30-4:35-7:40-10:50
Wreck-It Ralph (PG) Fri-Mon 11:35 Tue 3:25 Wed-Thu 11:15

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

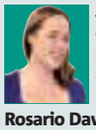
Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson

Stewart and Pattinson host Christmas party

Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson are reportedly getting pretty domestic, even going so far as to host a small Christmas party for their friends, according to Hollywood Life. "Kristen and Rob had a small, intimate Christmas tree decorating party on Sunday. They have a gorgeous tree set up at Kristen's, where Rob pretty much lives now," a source says. "They are not living with each other, but they are spending plenty of time with each other and they do sleep over often. They are in a really magical place right now despite some lingering trust issues on Rob's side."

The Word

Odd couples of 2012



THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

Rosario Dawson and Danny Boyle
A 22-year age difference hasn't stopped director Danny Boyle and actress Rosario Dawson from "canoodling" all over London, per the brilliant and descriptive London press. The May/December romance apparently bloomed on the set of their new movie Trance. Was it the Olympics' bizarre opening ceremony that took Dawson's heart?

Simon Cowell and Carmen Electra
The rumours are kind of true: "She's not my girlfriend," Cowell, 53, explained when he called in to On Air with Ryan Seacrest yesterday about the rumours between the two stars. "We're people who date." How very "bro" of you, Simon.

Avril Lavigne and Chad Kroeger
To the surprise of most, the singers got engaged this year after quietly dating for six months, Lavigne's rep confirmed to People magazine. "A romantic relationship blossomed as they spent time writing together," the rep says. This will be the Canadian singer's second marriage after splitting from Sum 41 frontman Deryck Whibley in 2009. Kroeger "makes her so happy," a source tells the magazine. "Both of their families could not be more excited."

Johnny Depp

She's just not that into you

Newly single Johnny Depp is reportedly hung up on his Rum Diary co-star, Amber Heard.

The problem is the feeling isn't exactly mutual, according to Radar Online. "Johnny and Amber have been having a lot of fun spending time with one another, but Amber keeps telling him she's not interested in being with him in a monogamous relationship," a source says.

"She says she feels she's too young for him, but the main factor is Amber prefers dating women over men and has no interest in committing to a guy — even if he is Johnny Depp."

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LIFE 3

Santa's cookies 2.0

Chocolate Shortbread Melt-Aways

This recipe makes five dozen small cookies. DAN CLAPSON

These cookies have a chocolate intensity that balances with their buttery richness, and when piped onto a baking tray, they look like chocolate kisses. They are a good addition to a holiday cookie tin.

- 1 cup (250 ml) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup (250 ml) icing sugar, sifted
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups (375 ml) all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup (80 ml) Dutch process cocoa powder, sifted
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) cornstarch
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml salt)

1. Preheat the oven to 325 F (160 C) and line 2 baking trays with parchment paper.

2. Cream the butter and icing sugar together until smooth. Beat in the vanilla extract.

3. Add the flour, cocoa, cornstarch, and salt, and beat until evenly incorporated.

4. Spoon the soft cookie dough into a piping bag fitted with a large plain tip, and pipe 1-inch (2.5 cm) "kisses" onto the baking trays, leaving a 2-inch (5 cm) space between the cookies.

5. Bake the cookies for 12 to 14 minutes, until they lift away from the parchment paper without sticking. Let the cookies cool completely on the tray before removing. The cookies will keep in an airtight container for up to 3 days. **FROM ANNA OLSON'S BACK TO BAKING**

Holiday baking. As the undisputed queen of sweets, Anna Olson knows a thing or two about delicious treats

DAN CLAPSON
life@metronews.ca

Anna Olson. SUBMITTED

Whether it's gingerbread, yule logs or some shortbread, with the holiday season comes the sweet smell of desserts in the air.

Food Network personality Anna Olson took some time out of her busy baking schedule to chat about what she's whipping up for the holidays. And, no surprise, she is as sweet as sugar!

What's the first memory you have of baking over the holidays?
Making Cherry Walnut Icebox cookies with my grandma.

I still make these cookies each year. It's not Christmas without them.

Do you and your family have any Christmas traditions when it comes to the baking?
My mom and I book a day each year to bake our family recipes as well as make perogies.

Then we go out for dinner to toast our accomplishment — and so we don't have to do any more dishes!

Fruitcake always gets a bad rap. Where do people go wrong with it?
I think people don't think you can alter the fruit and nut combination, but you have a great deal of flexibility.

So long as the total measurement of fruit and nuts is the same, feel free to switch out the candied peel for dried cherries or cranberries, or replace the prunes with figs!

Any tips to ensure a sturdy gingerbread house that will stand the test of time and also small hands picking candy off of it?
For a gingerbread house that needs to remain intact for more than a week, then it really shouldn't be made to be eaten. In this case, use vegetable shortening instead of butter in the cookie dough. For an icing that holds up well, use a recipe that calls for meringue powder. It sets up firmly but it's also easy to work with when soft.

A Christmas cookie can take many shapes and forms. What is your go-to variety?
Other than my Grandma's Cherry Walnut cookies, I must have my Toblerone Shortbread onhand the entire month of December.

Your love for baking and sweets is undeniable, but is there one thing you don't like to whip up in your kitchen?
I've never really clicked with rum balls. I always pass them over if they are on a cookie platter and I don't make them at home.

Last, but perhaps most important, do you leave milk and cookies out for Santa on Christmas Eve?
You bet! I need to stay on the nice list!

Liquid Assets

White wines for zombies with Santa hats?

LIQUID ASSETS
Peter Rockwell
@therealwineguy
liquidassets@eastlink.ca

I write this column assuming the world hasn't ended today. If I'm wrong, here are some red wine suggestions to match with turkey for all you roaming hordes of zombies who may or may not have taken over the earth.

One of the wine world's most heinous old wives' tales is that white wines only go with white meats and red wines only go with red meats. If something has to end today, please let it be that thick slice of baloney.

You have to think about more than the star of the meal when it comes to a liquid pairing. Considering all the side dishes means a meal featuring the grand gobbler can cast a wide net catching many red wines.

For some outside the box drinking, think a mid-priced Italian Chianti, a robust Rioja from Spain or a fresh flavoured merlot from California, Australia or Chile.

As a long time pinot-file, I tend to crave a fruit-forward pinot noir when carving. New Zealand knows its way around the grape and the 2011 Oyster Bay Pinot Noir ($19.95 - $24.99) oozes ample very berry fruit that should appeal to all of your table mates, whether alive ... or living dead.

Happy holidays!

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Masse's nofrills 925 Southdale Rd.

Have a few gaps in your schedule you're looking to fill?
Whether you're hoping to dance, drink or just relax, check out these hot upcoming events.

MIX OF SIX
Julian Uzielli
london@metronews.ca

Rock for Tots

On Saturday, Call The Office (216 York St.) is hosting a benefit concert to help make Christmas merry for underprivileged kids. The first annual Give Your Head a Shake show will run throughout the afternoon and into the evening and feature seven local bands including Jayne Mansfield's Head and '63 Monroe. The cost of admission is $5 or an unwrapped toy, with all proceeds going to Toys For Tots. All ages, 3 - 9 p.m. Photo courtesy of Scott Bentley.

The London Room

London has a strong history of art and culture — that's what the Michael Gibson Gallery is saying to visitors with its London Room exhibit. The show features works by nine Forest City artists including Margot Ariss, Roly Fenwick and David Partridge, and was mounted as a complement to the gallery's exhibition honouring Canadian landscape artist Doris McCarthy. The show runs in the middle gallery until Dec. 29. Photo courtesy of Michael Gibson Gallery.

Celtic Christmas

On Saturday, one of Canada's premier Celtic choirs will be performing at Aeolian Hall (795 Dundas St. E). The Canadian Celtic Choir, founded in 1996, will sing a selection of seasonal carols as well as songs from their repertoire of traditional Irish and Welsh origin. They will be joined by Irish folksinger Michael Kelly Cavan. There is a 2 p.m. matinee and a 7 p.m. evening show. Tickets are $20 and available at the Aeolian box office (519-672-7950) and aeolianhall.ca.
Photo courtesy of Ian Davies.

Last chance to see ARTS this year

Saturday, the ARTS Project (203 Dundas St.) will close its final art exhibition of the year. In the spotlight are two born-and-raised London painters, Tim Cosens and Barry Trower. Both artists got their start at H.B. Beal Secondary School. Trower's unique brand of magical surrealist work has been featured in galleries across the region, and Cosens' work focuses on his impressions of Southwestern Ontario's parks and landscapes. The gallery is open Friday and Saturday from noon to 5 p.m. Pictured: Zircus by Barry Trower.

Fresh local ice

As the mercury dips below zero, watch for the public rinks in Victoria Park and in front of Covent Garden Market (130 King St.) to open. Though both public rinks officially opened to the public earlier this month, the recent spate of warm weather has put a damper on skaters' plans. However, as soon as it's cold enough the rinks will be open for free public skating. The Victoria Park rink is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and the Market rink will close each evening at 7 p.m.
Photo by Julian Uzielli.

New Year's Eve fireworks

Victoria Park has a big entertainment lineup to help Londoners ring in 2013. The Rockin' New Year's Eve event, organized by the City of London, will include various children's entertainment acts starting at 7:15 p.m. and a children's fireworks show at 9 p.m. Vancouver folk rockers Spirit of the West will play the bandshell at 10:45 p.m., and the celebrations will be capped off by fireworks at midnight. And of course, there will be hot chocolate, coffee and skating available until midnight. Photo by Julian Uzielli.

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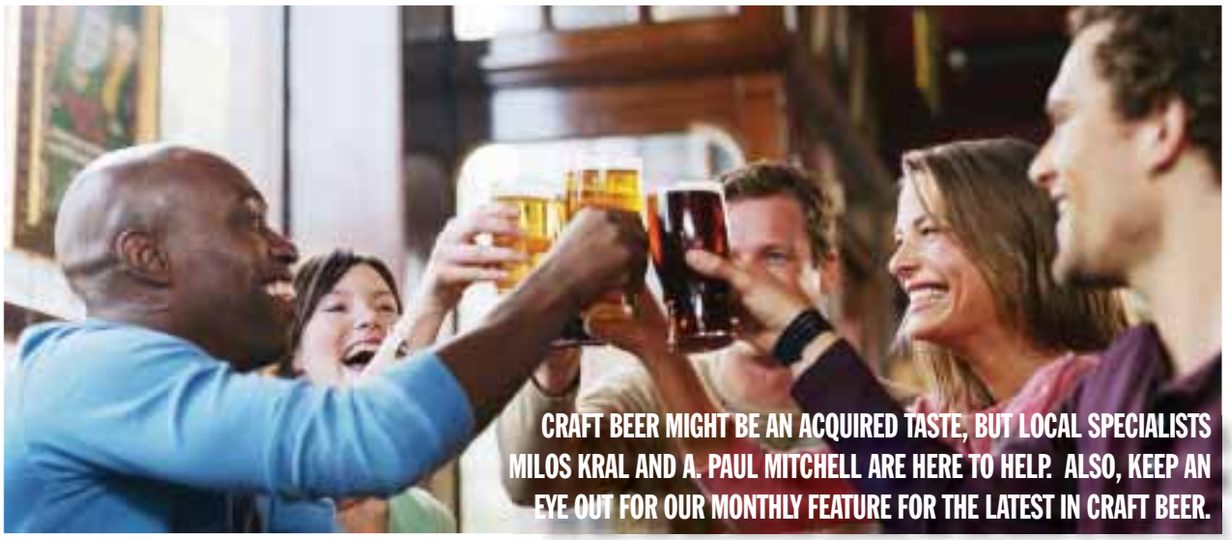

CRAFT BEER MIGHT BE AN ACQUIRED TASTE, BUT LOCAL SPECIALISTS MILOS KRAL AND A. PAUL MITCHELL ARE HERE TO HELP. ALSO, KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR OUR MONTHLY FEATURE FOR THE LATEST IN CRAFT BEER.

GROWING SENSE OF EXCITEMENT IN BEER INDUSTRY

For years, Ontario beer drinkers were looking at the world around them with envy. Everybody else was drinking lots of interesting beers.

Now that is just a memory. Ontario brewers made sure of that. An ever-growing sense of excitement can be felt within the beer industry.

New breweries keep sprouting everywhere. Soon we will have one in London. New beers are brewed daily, many results of collaborations of two or more different breweries. Who says businesses cannot compete in a friendly manner?

We drank locally crafted versions of Berliner Weise, saisons, imperial stouts, barrel aged beers, sours, and many other styles that became part of our daily beer offerings.

Almost every brewery was part of the excitement. This space is not big enough to mention all who deserve it. So cheers to all the wonderful people in Ontario craft breweries.

Support our London community — shop, drink, and eat local.

- Milos Kral

FRUIT-INFUSED BREWS A TREND FOR 2013

Strong mocha, cocoa and vanilla aromas rise deliciously from the midnight-black-coloured ale; Mill Street's Vanilla Porter is only one of many exciting novel styles hitting more beer pubs in 2013.

The upcoming year looks to continue the trend toward fruit-infused brews (pineapple, grapefruit, raspberry). Lighter refreshing beers are always summer favourites and craft brewing is pushing frontiers with exciting new combinations (think maple, honey and other traditional cookie spices) that provide depth of flavour without undue heaviness.

New red beer and brown ales such as Spearhead's Moroccan Brown look to explode on the scene this year, especially combined with sweeter tastes like date, fig and other culinary-inspired ideas.

Massively hopped beers should continue to be popular. Balanced by malt flavour for complexity instead of sheer overwhelming bitterness, look for more unfiltered and unpasteurized beers as a result.

Bartenders have been toying with beer cocktails (more than just Black Velvets and Irish Car Bombs) and as the big brewers are starting to push the concept, they will only gain more popularity.

- A. Paul Mitchell

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HOLIDAY 2012 gift guide

Tap into these tech gifts

iPhone 5 — $699 and up (without contract).

Samsung Galaxy Note 2 — $729 (without contract).

LG Optimus G — $599 (without contract), top left, Sony Xperia T — $549 (no contract, price may vary), centre, Nokia Lumia 920 — $549.99 (without contract).

MIKE YAWNEY
For Metro

With processors and features that rival small computers, it's no wonder smartphones have quickly become the high tech gift for the holidays. There are many smartphones to choose from, but which one is right for your loved one? Take a look at our picks to find the perfect one.

iPhone 5 — $699 and up (without contract)
Featuring an all new design, Apple's latest smartphone is sure to turn heads. The diamond-cut bevelled edges not only look beautiful, they take away the rough edges, giving it an elegant feel. This is the first iPhone to feature LTE, which means you can take advantage of the latest high-speed wireless networks. The Retina display has also been made slightly larger so you get more usable workspace on the screen.

Samsung Galaxy Note 2 — $729 (without contract)
An ideal smartphone for those in marketing, advertising or someone with a creative flair. Often referred to as a smartphone/tablet hybrid, the Note II features a large 5.5-inch screen that can be navigated through touch or a special stylus known as an S Pen. Users can use the pen to sketch or draw on maps, photos or blueprints. The blazing quad-core processor gives this phone performance like no other.

Nokia Lumia 920 — $549.99 (without contract)
The most advanced Windows phone to date. Sporting wireless charging and a touchscreen so sensitive you can use it while wearing gloves, the Nokia 920 is sure to be a popular phone this holiday. The 8.7-megapixel camera also shoots surprisingly well in low light conditions.

LG Optimus G — $599 (without contract)
This smartphone has received the title of "Canada's fastest smartphone." Not only is it the first handset to feature Qualcomm's lightning-quick quad-core processor, it's also the first phone to support the 2,600 MHz spectrum, which is the fastest LTE network in the country. The Optimus G also features a voice-activated camera that will snap photos whenever someone says the word "cheese."

Sony Xperia T — $549 (no contract, price may vary)
Known simply as "The Bond Phone," the Xperia T is the same smartphone used by 007 himself in Skyfall. This handset features a 13-megapixel camera and is Playstation certified, which is perfect for those who enjoy gaming on the go. Music and photos can easily be shared by bringing this smartphone close to other NFC-enabled devices.

Mophie Powerstation Pro — $99
Smartphones are simply paperweights without a fully charged battery. Fortunately, this device will ensure your battery lasts all day and then some. The Powerstation Pro holds enough juice to recharge your smartphone up to four times. It's lightweight, rugged, dustproof and waterproof so it's perfect for those constantly on the go.

Ballistic Cases — various prices
You spent a fortune on your new smartphone, so why not protect your investment. Ballistic cases are designed to do just that. Ballistic cases have been tested to withstand drops, being run over by vehicles, and Fido's canine teeth.

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(1) Price with the Tab. Subject to approved credit. (2) Bonus gift will vary by store location and value of phone. See store for full details. Bonus gift available with new activations only. While quantities last.

Sweet scents

Beyoncé Midnight Heat, Eau de Parfum, $59 (50ml), $39 (30ml), available at Sears and drugstores across Canada.

YNGAREN Glass Vanity Bottles, set of 3, $14.99, available at Ikea, ikea.com/ca.

Lovestruck Floral Rush by Vera Wang, Eau de Parfum, $105 (100ml), $79 (50ml), available at The Bay, Sears, Shoppers Drug Mart/Pharmaprix, Murale, London Drugs, Jean Coutu, and Sephora.

Philosophy Amazing Grace Fragrance Layering Collection, $64, available at Sephora, and select Bay and Shoppers Drug Mart stores.

Fragrance Sampler Kit, $75, available at Shoppers Drug Mart, shoppersdrugmart.ca.

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Get crafty with gift wrapping

Use craft paint to create a holiday theme. YUMMY MUMMY PHOTO

SARAH GUNN
YummyMummyClub.ca

Wrapping presents is one of my favourite things to do this time of year. I love the patterns of paper, the ribbons and the bows.

This year, though, I wanted to get a little crafty with my Christmas wrapping so I challenged myself to come up with three different ways to use brown paper.

I discovered that brown paper packages don't just have to be tied up with string — they can be decorated with almost anything. (Yes, The Sound of Music is my favourite movie of all time).

I mostly used things around the house, but if you don't have a basement full of craft supplies, you can get everything you need at any craft store.

- Paint your packages in a holiday theme using craft paint.
- Use ribbon, scrapbook paper, and stickers for another look.
- Wrap your package in a band of felt and add details with felt snowflakes and letters.

YUMMYMUMMYCLUB.CA IS AN ONLINE RESOURCE TO HELP BUSY WOMEN SURVIVE MOTHERHOOD.

Try ribbon, scrapbook paper and stickers for decoration. YUMMY MUMMY PHOTO

"With the holidays coming up I can send pictures, email or text my family, even if they are not in my city, which keeps me connected."

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Holly jolly hostess gifts

Methond Holiday Foaming Hand Wash, $4.39 each, available at Canadian Tire, Shoppers Drug Mart, well.ca, Safeway, Home Outfitters, London Drugs, Thrifty, Pharmasave, Metro, Sobeys, and Loblaws.

Cable Knit Tea Cozy Red, $14.50, available at Indigo, chapters.indigo.ca.

Cucina Perfumed Candles, $15 each, available at Fruits & Passion, fruits-passion.ca.

Baléa Snowman Moisturizing Hand Soaps, $4.99 each, available at Shoppers Drug Mart, shoppersdrugmart.ca.

Ceramic Santa Mug, Red or White, $4.99 each, available at Shoppers Drug Mart, shoppersdrugmart.ca.

Ginger Hand Wash, $8, available at The Body Shop, thebodyshop.ca.

Boxed Scented Candle, $14.99, available at Homesense, homesense.ca.

Glass Magnets, $6.99, available at Winners, winners.ca.

The Roman Catholic Parish Community Of St. Michael's

511 Cheapside St. London

Warmly invites you to come join us for the celebration of Christmas

DECEMBER 24:
5:00pm; 7:00pm; 9:00pm and Midnight

DECEMBER 25
10:00am and 12:00noon

NEW YEAR'S EVE:
5:00pm

NEW YEAR'S DAY:
9:00am and 11:00am

Metropolitan United Church

468 Wellington Street, London
519 432 7189 ex. 21

December 24th

4:30 p.m. Teddy Bears and PJs – an interactive service especially for children

8:00 p.m. Traditional Service with the Senior Choir

11:00 p.m. Communion Service with the Metropolitan Choristers

The Rev. Dr. Jeff Crittenden will preside at all services.

December 30th

Services at *9:30 & 11:00 a.m.*

Our guest, the Rev. Dr. Barry Moore with preach.

2012 Holiday Worship Services

COME CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH US

ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL BASILICA

196 Dufferin St., London ON.,

Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord
Dec 24: 5:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m., 9:00 p.m., 12:00 a.m.,
Dec 25: 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m.

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
Dec 31: 6:00 p.m., **Jan 1**: 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord
Jan 5: 6:00p.m., **Jan 6**: 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m.

Dundas St. Centre United Church

482 Dundas St (at Maitland)
519-434-9173
www.dundasunited.com

Sunday, Dec 23
@ 10:30 am Advent 4

Christmas Eve Worship Service
@ 7 pm Lessons & Carols

Sunday, Dec 30
@ 10:30 am Service of Light & Song

West London Alliance Church

750 Wonderland Road N.

Christmas Eve Services

4:30 - Celebration for young families

6:30 - Candlelight service for adults

4 SPORTS

World juniors

'Discipline is the subplot' in Canada's loss in Finland

It was an early wake-up call for Canada's world junior team. Undisciplined and out of sorts, the Canadians dropped an exhibition game to host Finland 3-2 on Thursday. Two of the Finnish goals were scored with a 5-on-3 power play during a game that saw Canada assessed nine minor penalties in total.

"I think the challenge for us obviously is coming together as a team," said Canadian coach Steve Spott. "It's our first game. But ultimately I think discipline is the subplot here tonight, where we have to get used to the standard of officiating and deal with our discipline a lot smarter than we did tonight."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lockout

Season closer to cancellation with more games axed

The NHL has moved one step closer to calling off another season because of a labour dispute.

Regular-season games through Jan. 14 were wiped off the schedule on Thursday afternoon, setting up a potential timeline for the league's collective bargaining negotiations with the NHL Players' Association.

It was likely the final batch of games that will be cancelled if commissioner Gary Bettman holds true to his word that the league must play at least a 48-game schedule with playoffs ending in June. The next announcement from the league will either be a new CBA or a second cancelled season in eight years.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nathan MacKinnon, from Sidney Crosby's hometown of Cole Harbour, N.S., is living his dream overseas with a spot on Canada's world junior roster. The youngest player on Team Canada is considered a possible No. 1 pick in the 2013 NHL draft. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

MacKinnon dreaming of gold this Christmas

World juniors. Highly touted 17-year-old living dream with chance for glory with Team Canada

PHILIP CROUCHER
Metro in Halifax

Nathan MacKinnon will wake up Christmas morning far away from the comforts of home.

He'll open his eyes in a Russian hotel room next to a teammate, who like him, is spending the holidays thousands of miles from the family gatherings and traditions he's come to love.

Still, there is no place MacKinnon would rather be this holiday season. That's because the 17-year-old Cole Harbour, N.S., standout with the Halifax Mooseheads is fulfilling a dream — one shared by most teenagers who lace up their skates — to play for Canada at the world junior hockey championships.

"It's different, but I'm doing something that I love. I'm having a lot of fun," he said Thursday by phone after playing in Canada's first exhibition game, a 3-2 loss to Finland. "It would be nice to be home for Christmas, but this is an excellent thing."

MacKinnon, who doesn't turn 18 until September, is the youngest member of Team Canada, but goes into the tournament with plenty of expectations.

A potential first overall pick in next year's NHL draft, MacKinnon will be looked upon to play an important role among 18- and 19-year-olds.

Quoted

"It was a cool experience — a world junior game — it was exciting. And I'm sure every game is going to get more and more exciting."

Nathan MacKinnon, on playing for Team Canada in a 3-2 exhibition loss to Finland Thursday

Whatever that role turns out to be, MacKinnon is ready to accept it. With the Mooseheads, he's on the No. 1 line and getting plenty of power-play time. With Team Canada, he could be used as a 13th forward and get the odd shift on special teams.

"I want to help the team and I want to be an impact player," said MacKinnon, who sits third in Quebec Major Junior Hockey League scoring with 22 goals and 30 assists in 30 games. "But I'm going to do whatever role I'm given and hopefully the team can be successful."

MacKinnon is the first Nova Scotian to play at the world juniors for Canada since 2007 and 2008, when Brad Marchand of Hammonds Plains cracked the team.

Ringette world to descend on London ice

London's about to take the spotlight on the world stage of ringette.

The ice pads at Western Fair District's Sports Centre will be host Dec. 29 to Jan. 3 to hundreds of people competing in the U19 World Ringette Championship.

Six teams are vying for top honours in the sport, including local athletes Sydney Granger of Dorchester (Team Canada East) and Londoner Michelle Suchard (Team Russia).

The event marks Ringette Canada's second U19 championship and a chance to share the sport with a wider audience.

"London's sort of on the western edge of ringette in Ontario," said Kevin Knight, co-chair of the local organizing committee. "It would be nice if we could grow a little bit more."

While many of the team names honour countries where ringette is emerging as a sport — like Finland and the U.S. — all the players are Canadian, Knight said. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Look ahead

Organizers expect to see more than a thousand faces in the crowd for some games during the U19 World Ringette Championship in London.

- Opening ceremonies are Dec. 28.
- Visit ringette.ca for a full schedule.

NFL

Giants should get boost from return of receiver Nicks

The return of Giants wide receiver Hakeem Nicks to practice Thursday after missing the previous day with a sprained left knee could only bode well for his on-field rapport with quarterback Eli Manning.

Nicks, who has 53 catches for 629 yards and three touchdowns, says he expects to be healthy enough to face the Ravens on Sunday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Soccer

England moves to tackle racism

The English Football Association has approved proposals to help stamp out the resurgence of racism in the national game.

The Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Action Plan was requested by British Prime Minister David Cameron after high-profile cases last season, and various fan incidents. Among proposals, managers and players will have "mandatory induction arrangements" if they are new to the "British cultural environment."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Christine Nesbitt of London competes in the 1,000-metre race on the final day of the Essent ISU World Cup Speed Skating at Thialf Ice Stadium in Heerenveen, Netherlands, on Nov. 18. DEAN MOUH/GETTY IMAGES

Nesbitt's quest for perfection

Fire on ice. Despite a world record and slew of medals in 2012, London speedskater strives for the unattainable

Insight into what makes Christine Nesbitt such a superb athlete can be gleaned from her views on how she closed out her remarkable 2012.

The 27-year-old speedskater from London, who began the year by smashing the world record in the 1,000 metres in January and winning the 1,000-metre and 1,500-metre on consecutive days at the world single distance championships in March, had a dominant fall, grabbing seven medals — four gold, one silver, two bronze — in four World Cup events.

It all added up to her being shortlisted for the Lou Marsh Award as Canada's athlete of the year, which went to soccer star Christine Sinclair.

But it's far from enough for Nesbitt.

"I'm not very happy how I raced this fall," she said this week in an interview from her home in Calgary. "I don't feel like I had an excellent race."

To be an Olympian and a world champion obviously requires tremendous dedication, commitment and mental toughness to go with athletic ability.

Nesbitt takes it to another level. The 2010 gold medallist at the Vancouver Olympics not only wants to win every competition she enters, she's motivated by a quest for something she admits is impossible — perfection.

"The problem is you're always trying to achieve something that is, essentially, unattainable," Nesbitt said of her goal to produce a flawless race.

Nesbitt thought she'd done it last January at the Olympic Oval in Calgary.

Angered by her skate in the 500 metres earlier that day, she tore over the 1,000-metre course in one minute, 12.68 seconds, shaving nearly a half-second off the world mark set by teammate Cindy Klassen in 2006 on the same ice.

"At the time, I didn't know how I could get better," Nesbitt said this week. "But this summer, I watched it again and saw mistakes, or at least things that I could do better."

While some might call this a curse, Nesbitt and her coaches see it as one of her strengths, something that gives her an edge going into the Olympics in Sochi in 14 months. If there wasn't something to strive for, there would be complacency and that is one of the biggest enemies of the elite athlete.

"It is a bit surprising to hear an athlete be frustrated with their performance when they're consistently on the podium," said Mark Wild, who co-coaches Nesbitt along with Xiuli Wang. "But that's one of her assets as an athlete.

"She's certainly intense and she expects a lot out of herself."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The need for speed

And it all began on a hockey rink

London speedskater Christine Nesbitt's first experience on blades was playing minor hockey before she moved on to short-track speedskating at age 12 and long-track at 18.

She likes each event for different reasons, calling it "a toss-up" for her favourite.

Nesbitt likes the 1,000 metres because it's "fun" going so fast.

"I've never driven a car really fast, but I think it must be the same feeling except I'm generating that speed myself," she said. "It's pretty amazing."

By contrast, Nesbitt calls the 1,500 metres "excruciatingly painful" but with a great sense of satisfaction after a good race, unlike any other distance.

Coach Mark Wild said Nesbitt's love of the sport is reflected in the work she puts into it. In addition to intense skating workouts, she endures the long bike rides in the summer heat to build endurance and lifts heavy weights for strength.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

What's Your Favourite Greatest Hit of All Time?

greatest hits more 1039 fm
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metro

More 103.9 FM and Metro News want to hear from you.
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Log on to www.more1039.ca now &submit your favourites.
Beginning December 26th we'll begin counting them down.

www.more1039.ca

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Whatever your age or position, you are about to get the chance to move up in the world. Powerful people will be watching you closely today and over the weekend, so make sure they like what they see.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Times are good and about to get even better. It may take two or three days for things to pick up speed but once they do, you will be on a roller coaster ride of fun and games. Hang on and enjoy the experience.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Most likely you are reading too much into a situation that is of no real importance but for your own peace of mind, you should investigate further. If someone is trying to take you for a ride — get off quick!

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You will notice a subtle change in the way other people react to you today. But it is the way that you choose to behave towards them that will determine whether the next few weeks are going to be easy or difficult.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
The Sun's change of signs puts the emphasis on matters of a work nature, and also on your physical health. The two are closely related. In a nutshell: If you work too hard your wellbeing may suffer. Slow down!

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You don't have to do anything special today: The Sun's change of signs will do it all for you. One of the most active times of the year is about to begin, so prepare yourself mentally for what lies ahead.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
No matter how many interesting things may be taking place in the world, you must focus exclusively on the needs and desires of loved ones today. There has never been a better time to show how much you care.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 2 04 - Nov. 22
Keep your options open today because there will be all sorts of new and interesting events taking place and you need to be free to react to any or all of them. Part of the meaning of life is to have fun.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
The past few weeks have been hectic to say the least and the momentum you have built up will keep you going for quite some time. But don't forget you have limits.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You may be eager to get started on a new project but think before you act. Make sure you are well prepared. Any day can be a new beginning. Though, yes, this one is more special than most.

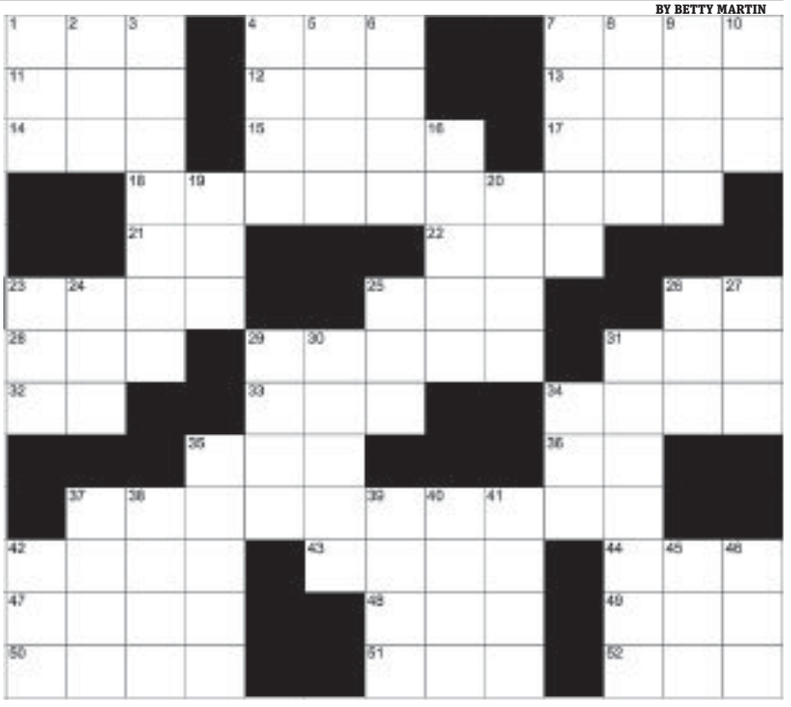
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You may be a bit more reclusive than usual today and over the weekend but there is no need to worry about it. You're not withdrawing from the world, you're just getting your thoughts and feelings in order.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You seem to be having doubts about something that only a few days ago you thought was the best idea in the world. The good news is your doubts will pass very quickly and then you can get on and make it happen.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword

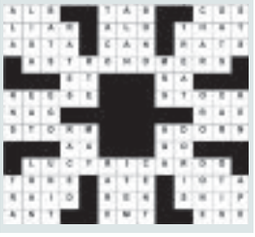
BY BETTY MARTIN



Across
1. Fishing need
4. To and —
7. Catch sight of
11. Silkworm
12. Make tracks
13. Desire
14. Schedule abbr.
15. Sale condition
17. Garfield pal
18. Seafarer's beacon
21. Disco proof of age (abbr.)
22. Select
23. Flintstone pet
25. Before
26. Magnum, P.I.'s pilot buddy
28. School subj.
29. — Acres
31. Cruise setting
32. Emergency room personnel (abbr.)
33. — Lingus
34. Smack a fly
35. Tavern brew
36. "Dirty Harry" actor (init.)
37. Eastern prov.
42. Cloak
43. Fashion magazine
44. Scottish cap
47. Barbra's "Funny Girl" co-star
48. Be indisposed
49. View
50. Hide
51. One of The Three Stooges
52. Family tree member (abbr.)

Down
1. Soak flax
2. Globe
3. Ringing up, old style
4. Flown at the 2012 Olympic games
5. Poison ivy result
6. Exclude
7. Whoop
8. Pea jackets
9. Mayberry boy
10. Casual top
16. Sandcastle spot
19. Wedding vows
20. Diner sign
23. German article
24. Quaint hotels
25. According to
26. Afternoon gathering
27. Garfield, for one
29. Elaborate party
30. Actress Witherspoon
31. Spring or Fall clothing
34. Chem. or biol.
35. Deviate
37. Point a finger at
38. October birthstone
39. Type of chowder
40. Stew
41. Prefix with confidence
42. Officer of the peace
45. Yes, to Angus
46. Actor Gibson

Yesterday's Crossword



What's online

See today's answers metronews.ca/answers.

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

7		8	9				4	
		3			2			1
		1			6	3		
				3		5	8	
	9	6		5				
		9	7			6		
6			8			7		
	2				4	1		5

Yesterday's Sudoku

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